THE

EVANGELICAL INTELLIGENCER.

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BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIRS OF INCREASE MATHER, D. D.

HE was the youngest son of Mr. Richard Mather, who went to America, in 1635, because he could no longer exercise his ministry with satisfaction to his conscience in his native country, and became minister at Dorchester, in New-England, where this his son was born, A. D. 1639. After gaining a good knowledge of the languages at school, and spending some time in Harvard college, he lived in the family of that worthy divine, Mr. John Norton, several years. It pleased God to make serious impressions upon his heart betimes, by which he was fitted for great service in his church. In 1657 he took a voyage to England, and after visiting his friends in Lancashire, went to Ireland to see his eldest brother, Mr. Samuel Mather, then minister in Dublin. He entered himself in Trinity College there, and in 1658 proceeded master of arts, performing the usual exercise with great applause. He was much respected by Dr. Winter, then provost of the college, and was chosen fellow, but did not accept it. The air of that country not agreeing with him, though he met with great civilities, and some good offers there, he returned to England, and was for some time a preacher to Mr. Howe's parish, at Torrington, in Devonshire, which was in the neighbourhood of another of his brothers, Mr. Nathaniel Mather, then minister of

Barnstaple. Upon Mr. Howe's return to Torrington, after Richard quitted the protectorship, he accepted an invitation of colonel Bingham, governor of Guernsey, to go into that island, in the year 1659, where he preached every Lord's day morning at the castle, and in the afternoon at the town called Peter's Port.

From thence he removed to Gloucester, at the earnest solicitation of Mr. Forbes and his friends there; but after some time he returned to Guernsey, where he was at the time of the restoration. Upon his refusing to set his hand to a paper, which was sent thither by general Monk, to be signed by all commissioned officers in those parts, by which they were required to declare, "That the times then were and would be happy;" he was in danger of losing the arrears of his salary, which amounted to above 100*l.* but providentially he escaped that loss. And upon Sir Hugh Pollard's being made governor of that island, when he came to be under the necessity either of conforming or quitting the place, he left Guernsey and came into England, where he was offered a living of some hundreds a year, if he would forsake his principles. But he chose rather to trust God's providence, than violate the tranquillity of his mind; and so he sailed again for New-England to his aged father, and there settled in the new church, in the north part of Boston. He was ordained May 27, 1664, when his father gave him the charge. He married the daughter of Mr. John Cotton, by whom he had three sons, Cotton Mather, D. D. well known by his writings; Mr. Nathaniel Mather, who died at the age of nineteen, whose life is printed; and Mr. Samuel Mather, who had a small congregation at Witney, in Oxfordshire, and published several valuable writings. The old gentleman had also seven daughters; and he and his wife had this uncommon comfort and satisfaction, of having seven of their children receiving the Lord's supper at the same communion with them. In 1680, when the synod sat at Boston, and the confession of faith was agreed upon, Mr. Mather was the moderator, and drew up the preface to it.

In 1683, king Charles, by a declaration, required from the inhabitants of New-England, a full submission, and an entire resignation of their charter to his pleasure; or else signified a *quo warranto* should be prosecuted. Mr. Mather being desired to be present at a public assembly of the freemen of Boston, to give his thoughts about that matter, complied, and publicly declared against

their having a hand in their own ruin; persuading them rather to leave themselves in the hands of God, and submit to his will, in a faithful discharge of their duty, than deliver themselves immediately into the hands of men, by a full submission and entire resignation to their pleasure. The question was carried in the negative *nem. con.* And this had a great influence on the country in general. Some malicious people, in order to be revenged on him for this, forged a letter, full of impertinent as well as treasonable expressions, and dating it Boston, 10 M. 3d 1683, they subscribed his name to it, and sent it to a worthy person at Amsterdam. This letter being conveyed to London, was read before the king and council; but it carried such evidence of its being a forgery, that though Sir Roger L'Estrange published some scraps of it, with his own comments, there was no prosecution of Mr. Mather. But judgment was entered against the charter of Massachusetts colony. King Charles died soon after, and in 1686 king James sent a governor, with a commission that enabled him, with three or four other men, to make what laws, and levy what taxes, they pleased.

But in a little time that king published a declaration for liberty of conscience. Some of the ministers of New-England, and their churches, drew up addresses of thanks to him, for the benefit enjoyed by this declaration; and Mr. Mather was desired to take a voyage to England and deliver them. A copy of the forged letter before mentioned coming to New-England, Mr. Mather wrote to a gentleman that had it, to vindicate himself, and named a person whom he suspected to have had a hand in the contrivance. This person arrested Mr. Mather in an action of defamation, and 500*l.* damage, purely, as was apprehended, with a design to stop his voyage. But the jury cleared him, and ordered the plaintiff to pay costs of court, and he embarked for England, April 7, 1688. He landed at Weymouth, and hastening to London, presented the addresses to the king; when he laid before his majesty the state of the country, and was favourably received.

Upon the revolution, he waited on the prince of Orange, and was instrumental in preventing the sending a letter to New-England (in common with the other plantations) confirming their old governor till further order, which would have had pernicious consequences. After the coronation of king William, Mr. Mather frequently waited upon him, and was very much assisted by Philip

lord Wharton, and others. His great endeavour was to get New-England resettled upon the charter foundation; but he was disappointed in his object by the unexpected dissolution of parliament. His next attempt was to get a writ of error in judgment, by which the case relating to the Massachusetts colony might be brought out of chancery into the king's bench; but herein he also failed. All therefore he had left for him to do was, to petition the king for a new charter, containing all the old one, with the addition of new and more ample privileges; which, after some time, he obtained, and then, March 29, 1692, he set sail for New-England, in the company of Sir William Phips, whom his majesty sent over governor, and they arrived safe at Boston, May 14, following. Soon after, there being a meeting of the general assembly of the province, the speaker of the house of representatives, or commons, publicly returned him thanks for his faithful and indefatigable endeavours to serve the country.

He now returned to his more pleasing employment, the care of his church, and of the college, of which he was president, and was created D. D. But in 1701 he resigned his charge in the college, because the general assembly required the president to reside at Cambridge. He continued at Boston preaching to his beloved people. He had several fits of sickness, from which he was remarkably recovered; but till he was past eighty years of age, his intellects did not appear enfeebled. He at last expired (in the arms of his eldest son) August 23, 1723; and was honoured by his church (who ever showed a great esteem and veneration for him) with a more splendid funeral than ever had been seen for any divine in those parts. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Foxcroft, on 2 Chron. xxiv. 15. And the ministers of Boston, for nine or ten weeks successively, supplied his pulpit, and expressed their condolence with his church. He kept a constant diary, in which he inserted remarks upon the most eminent dealings of God with him, both in a way of providence and grace.

MISCELLANY, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

THE PLAN OF AGREEMENT

Between the Corporation for the relief of poor and distressed Presbyterian Ministers, and of the poor and distressed Widows and Children of Presbyterian Ministers, and the annual Contributors. *That is to say:*

I. THAT the yearly rates of contributors to the fund for the support of their widows and children, shall be either two pounds, equal to five dollars and one-third; three pounds, equal to eight dollars; four pounds, equal to ten dollars and two-thirds; five pounds, equal to thirteen dollars and one-third; six pounds, equal to sixteen dollars; seven pounds, equal to eighteen dollars and two-thirds; eight pounds, equal to twenty-one dollars and one-third; or nine pounds, equal to twenty-four dollars; and the annuities to be paid by the corporation to the widows and children of contributors, be respectively five times the said yearly rates, that is to say; ten pounds, fifteen pounds, twenty pounds, twenty-five pounds, thirty pounds, thirty-five pounds, forty pounds, or forty-five pounds.

II. That any minister of the gospel in the communion of the general assembly of the presbyterian churches in America, may become a contributor to the fund in one year after his first settlement in a congregation; that is, at the first meeting of the general assembly in the month of May, that shall happen one year after his settlement; or any candidate under their care may also become a contributor, upon paying one year's rate, and giving bond to the corporation for the annual payment of the said rate during his natural life.

III. That any minister or candidate may, at any time, be admitted as a subscriber to the fund upon his paying one year's rate and giving bond as aforesaid, and moreover paying to the treasurer, at the time of his subscribing, a sum of money equal to the amount of his annual rate, considered as an annuity in arrear, for a term of years equal to half the excess of his age at the time of subscribing above twenty-eight years, computed at six per centum per annum, simple interest.

IV. That any contributor shall have it in his option, either at the time of his subscription, or at any other time during his life, either to give his bond to the corporation for the punctual payment of the rate he may choose, yearly and every year, during his natural life, or to deposit a sum of money in the hands of the corporation, the annual interest of which, computed at six per centum, shall be equal to the annual rate which he has chosen; which sum of money so deposited in their hands shall be improved by the corporation in lieu of his annual rate, and returned to his family after the death of the said contributor.

V. * That any contributor may, in lieu of his annual rate, or of a deposit, as aforesaid, the annual interest of which shall be equal to his yearly rate, pay into the hands of the treasurer a sum equal to the present worth of his annual rate, considered as an annuity to continue for a term of years equal to half the difference between his age, at the time of making such payment, and eighty-six years, computed at five per centum per annum, compound interest: the said sum not to be returned to his family after his decease, as in the case of a deposit, but to remain in the fund.

VIII. That if any congregation under the care of the general assembly of the presbyterian churches of America, shall at any time pay to the corporation a principal sum, the annual interest of which at six per centum is equal to one of the rates of the contributors—the widow or children of the pastor of the said congregation, on whose account the said sum was paid, shall be entitled to the annuity corresponding to that rate, if he shall die during the continuance of his pastoral relation to the said congregation: Provided, that the age of the said pastor shall not have exceeded twenty-eight years at the time when the payment was made; and provided also, that congregations that have made the aforesaid contributions shall pay an additional rate on the second and every subsequent marriage of their pastor, in like manner as is provided, in case of ministers marrying, in article XVIII. nor shall the said pastor forfeit his title to the annuity by suspension, deposition, or removal from the congregation, provided he pay to the fund the same annual rate during his life, either by himself or by another

* N. B. The 6th, 7th and 24th articles are omitted, for the sake of brevity, as they contain nothing which can affect those who may become contributors hereafter.

congregation, which has made the same provision for the families of their pastors.

IX. That the contribution and payment of the principal sum so made by any congregation into the hands of the corporation, shall entitle every subsequent pastor, for ever, of that congregation, who shall be admissible as a subscriber to the fund, to the same annuity for his family, upon the same conditions and provisoes as mentioned in the preceding article: And in case of a copastoral charge, the congregation may make a double contribution, so as to provide for both their pastors

X. But that if a minister settles in said congregation, who is not admissible as a contributor to the fund on the account of his apparently declining state of health, or otherwise, the corporation shall pay to him, during his incumbency in the said congregation, the annual legal interest, at six per centum, of said contribution, instead of paying an annuity to his family.

XI. That if any minister settled in a congregation which has made such a contribution to the fund, be above twenty-eight years of age, and shall over and above the said contribution, pay into the fund a sum of money equal to the amount of the annual rate thereby chosen, considered as an annuity in arrear, for a term of years equal to half the excess of his age, at that time, above twenty-eight years, computed at six per centum per annum, simple interest, he shall be entitled to the benefit of the aforesaid contribution, and his family to the annuity corresponding to the annual rate; even although he had been previously entitled to another annuity for his family by a former subscription or settlement: but if he pay not the said sum, he shall be entitled only to the interest of such contribution as aforesaid.

XII. That if a minister becomes a contributor to the fund, either by himself or by a contributing congregation, and should afterwards settle as a pastor in a congregation which has made the aforesaid contribution, he shall not thereby lose his former title to the benefit of the fund, provided he continues to pay his annual rates during his life, that is to say, either his own rate, or the interest of the money deposited by his former congregation, or both, as the case may be.

XIII. That if any minister or congregation which has made a contribution to the fund as aforesaid, should at any time choose to increase it, he or they shall be at liberty to do it, on the terms, and under the restrictions specified in the preceding articles.

XIV. And whereas, it is of great importance that the number of contributors should never be suffered to decrease below the number that have been at any time contributors, it is agreed that any minister of the presbyterian denomination, or the congregations under their pastoral care, although not in the communion of the general assembly of the presbyterian churches of America, or any professor of the same denomination in any of our colleges or universities, may become contributors to the fund on the preceding terms; and further, it is agreed that if any layman of the said church or communion should choose to become a contributor, he may also be admitted on the said terms, until the number of contributors become seventy: and that afterwards laymen are not to be admitted to the benefits of the fund, provided there are ministers of the said communion offering to become contributors, sufficient to keep up that number at least, for ever: Provided always, that no minister of the said communion shall ever be refused admission as a contributor upon his application, and compliance with the foregoing stipulations and agreements; although there may be seventy or more contributors at the time of his application.

XV. That no widow or child shall at any time be entitled to an annuity until one full year after the husband's or father's decease.

XVI. That no annuity be transferable, or liable to be sold, inasmuch as that practice would frustrate the very end of the charter, and of the pious contributions for this purpose.

XVII. That if any contributor shall die before he has paid, either by annual rates, or otherwise, to the support of this fund a sum equal to three years' annuity; in that case there shall be deducted from the annuities due to his widow or children, such a sum, as, together with the rates already paid by him, (without computing interest thereon) shall make or be equal to three years' annuity: Provided always, that such deduction shall be made by retaining only one half of the annuity, until such deficiency be made good to the fund.

XVIII. That every contributor, at his second marriage, and as often as he shall afterwards marry, shall pay one year's rate extraordinary, as he thereby makes the chance worse, by bringing, in general, a younger widow upon the fund.

XIX. That if any contributor remove to a distant country or state, or resign his office, or be deposed, or suspended, in that

case and in every such case that may happen, provided he pay his yearly rate or quota, he shall be regarded as a contributor, and his widow and children be entitled to their annuity.

XX. That the contributor's widow, shall be entitled to her whole annuity, whatever that may be, during her widowhood, but to no more than half the annuity after her marriage, during her natural life.

XXI. That if there be a child, or children, and no widow, it or they shall be entitled to the annuity for thirteen years after the father's decease, and no longer.

XXII. That if there be a widow and a child, or children, and her husband or their father shall not have made by will, any distribution of the annuity due to his family, the annuity shall be divided among them as the corporation shall judge most for their relief: Provided always, That the widow be allowed as much, at least, as any one of the children. But if she marry before she is thirteen years a widow, she shall have one-third, and the child, or children, two-thirds for thirteen years to be counted from the death of her husband; and she shall after that term, have half the annuity during her natural life: but if all the children die before the thirteen years are expired, or if the thirteen years aforesaid, expire before the death of the widow: the widow, if unmarried, shall have the whole annuity during her widowhood, and only half annuity after her marriage.

XXIII. That the corporation may pay the child or children of deceased contributors, at their request, such a sum in hand, as will be equal to his or their annuity, if the corporation judge it most for his or their benefit, deducting the legal interest according to the number of years they are obliged to pay the annuities, and in proportion to the chances against his, her, or their life.

XXV. That if at any time the rates and interest of the fund be not sufficient to pay the annuities, the treasurer shall not diminish the capital, until he lay the affair before the corporation and the general assembly of the presbyterian churches in America, at their first meeting after this may happen.

XXVI. That as soon as a capital can be raised, sufficient to enable the corporation to pay the annuitants the yearly sums stipulated in this agreement, with all necessary charges, then the interest or surplusage, or part of it, shall be divided among the

annuitants, and distressed ministers and their widows and families, in such a manner as the corporation may think proper: Provided always, That particular regard be had to contributors, so that their widows and children be entitled to a share in said surplusage, in proportion to the sums paid by their husbands or fathers.

XXVII. That the names of all the contributors to this fund, shall be inserted in the corporation's book, and that their widows or children, or both, if need require, shall produce a certificate yearly, from the moderator of the presbytery next adjacent, where it can be procured, or from some other suitable authority, such as two magistrates nearest them, testifying their state and condition as the widow and children of such a minister, at such a time deceased; which certificate shall be laid before the secretary of the corporation, and if by him approved, shall be sent to the treasurer, who shall in all such cases be warranted to pay such annuity or annuities.

XXVIII. That the corporation shall and may make such alterations in this plan, from time to time, as shall be for the benefit of the fund and contributors, giving notice to the contributors of such alterations from time to time.

GRECIAN GAMES.

Alluded to in the Apostolic writings.

The passages in the New Testament which an acquaintance with the games of Greece assists in illustrating, are numerous. We select as a beautiful specimen, 2 Timothy iv. 6—8. *The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

The apostle writes on the presumption that *time* is the period of contest; that the *world* is the race ground; that *heaven*, *earth* and *hell* are spectators; that *God* in the midst sits Judge of the process; and that eternal life is the wreath that the victor shall receive. He evidently refers to the conflict with the cestus, when he says "I have fought a good fight;" he had employed the armour "on the right hand and on the left." He refers to the racer in the

words "I have finished my course," I have heard and obeyed the command, by the assistance of divine grace "So run that ye may obtain." Perhaps the same reference is had in the words "The time of my departure is at hand," as if he had said I have run the race of a holy life; I am now entering on the valley of death; this passed, I shall receive the prize of my high calling and be blest for ever. To the games he alludes in the words "I have kept the faith," I have adhered to the rules that are established. He elsewhere has the same idea: If a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully; through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, as between the *lines* of the stadium, the christian presses towards the heavenly mark.

O happy state that awaits the true believer! The presenting of "the crown" implies that the toil has ended. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours. When the end of the course shall be obtained the *body* shall sink to rest. Its necessities will never more excite anxiety. The midnight storm howls over the solitary hillock unregarded. The good man passes to a state where the inhabitants hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither doth the sun light on them nor any heat. Corporeal afflictions cease. The head discontinues its aching and the eye its watchfulness. Fevers have lost their powers to burn; agues can shake and dropsies swell no more. At death discipline ceases. The conflict of keeping under the body and bringing it, as did the ancient competitors, into subjection, is no more needed. The *mind* also will then be at perfect ease. It will enjoy, not the rest of indolence, but a divine tranquillity ever associated with active service. The mind of a saint could not be at ease, if infinite Majesty received no adoration and infinite love no anthems of praise. The rest of heaven is illustrated by the cessation of Jehovah from the work of creation; of the Saviour from the labours of his humiliation, and of the believer from the common toils of the week; but creation was followed with the exercise of universal government, the humiliation of Jesus with his intercession in heaven; and then only is one earthly sabbath profitably spent, when the saints worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness and rejoice before him.

Receiving the crown does not imply merely that the race is run or the battle fought, but that the *victory* is gained. When Jesus had offered one sacrifice for sins and sat down at the right hand of God, (the το λοιπον as the apostle expresses it, or) the

whole that remained was his waiting till his enemies became his footstool. In like manner when Paul had fought the fight and finished his course, he says (λοιπον) all that remains, is the crown of righteousness.

Who can describe the honours that are reserved for him that overcometh? Did the ancient Athletæ receive their tokens of victory?* the saints in heaven have their palms; they possess wreaths that shall never *fade* away. Were the gates of ancient cities thrown open and their walls broken down to receive the hero? when John in vision beheld the New Jerusalem, he says the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it; and the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: and there shall be no night there. Was it the privilege of the successful competitor to be honoured with a seat near the princes of the age in which he lived? Jesus has said "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne even as I also overcame and am sat down with my Father on his throne." The beloved apostle was indulged with a sight of a host of conquerors in heaven. "What are these which are arrayed in white robes?" said one of the elders, "and whence came they?" John seems to have been at a stand. "Sir thou knowest." Perhaps had he uttered his feelings he would have said, these are surely of the number of the thrones and dominions who have never sinned! They have come perhaps from some high region of the skies to awaken astonishment and to give examples of praise! No, no, John: these are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

"Once they were mourning here below,
And wet their couch with tears;
They *wrestled hard* as we do now
With sins, and doubts, and fears."

* Plutarch relates a pleasing anecdote relative to these wreaths in his life of Timoleon. When this hero was leading the Sicilians against the forces of Asdrubal and Hamilcar, an army of six thousand against one of seventy thousand, as he was ascending a hill near the banks of the Crimesus at the top of which the enemy's camp and all their vast forces would be in sight, he met some mules loaded with parsley. His army was thrown into instant consternation; for the Sicilians usually crown their sepulchres with this plant, and hence the proverb they had in use, with

Easy and natural as are analogies like these we have been tracing, it must nevertheless be admitted that the passage we have before us, suggests various marks of difference between the Grecian and christian competitor.

The judge of the games in Greece was usually a hero, and always a man; but of the believer's conflict *God is the judge*. A comparison of the fiftieth psalm and the sixth verse with the fifth of John and the twenty-second verse will supply a pointed proof that Jesus Christ is *God*. Happy if in our warfare we retain the remembrance that "all things are naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

The honour conferred on the Corinthian was the reward of debt; but that the saint shall enjoy, is the reward of grace. The term *give* in the passage is emphatic, for "He will *give* grace and glory," psalm 84. 11. "It is the father's good pleasure to *give* you the kingdom." Luke 12. 32. "Eternal life is the *gift* of God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 6. 28. Is the christian soldier victorious? it is because Christ is the captain of his salvation. Does the heavenly footman succeed? it is because Jesus is the forerunner, who by his own merit obtains the crown of righteousness, and through his abounding grace confers it. For this, in token of adoration and gratitude, the elders before the throne, who were perhaps *once elders* on earth, cast their crowns and sing "Thou art worthy, O Lord."

In Greece, the prizes were distributed as soon as the triumph was obtained; but the crown of the believer will not be conferred until "*that day*." The terms "that day" were used under the old testament dispensation in reference to the commencement (Zechariah 13. 1.) or the diffusion (Zechariah 14. 9.) of the gospel. Under the present economy they are employed to carry forward our ideas to the final judgment. Matthew 24. 36. 2 Thessalonians

respect to one who was dangerously ill, *He needs nothing but parsley*. The soldiers considered themselves as dead men. Timoleon was himself a Corinthian, and the Corinthians were accustomed, from their earliest history to regard the herb as sacred, and with it to bind the brows of their heroes. Timoleon addressed his men to remove their panic. He then took a chaplet of parsley and first crowned himself, each of his officers, and at length all his men did the same, while the shout echoed through the lines, We are conquerors; we are conquerors. *We want nothing but parsley*.

2. 3. and 2 Timothy 1. 12. The state of a believer when absent from the body and present with the Lord, in paradise, will without doubt be blessed; but not till the great day, or as it is also denominated, the last day, shall arrive will his coronation take place.

The honours of the games were for the most part assigned to a victorious individual. "Know ye not that they who run in a race run all, but *one* receiveth the prize?" Yet the apostle rejoices in the idea that the crown of righteousness shall be given not unto him only, but "to *all* them also who love his appearing." O blessed state in which not only an Enoch, an Abraham, a David and a Paul shall be seen wearing a crown of glory; but the same mercy shall be granted to every antediluvian patriarch, prophet and apostle whom grace divine had taught to fight the good fight of faith; in which harps of gold shall be given to all the diversity of saints, who love and who wait the revelation of Jesus Christ.

VARIETY.

It has been often remarked that no two leaves of a tree, no two spires of grass, no two flowers, no two animals exactly resemble each other. Each possesses his own peculiar and independent stamp. The same is true as to the frame and tenor of the human mind, and in relation to the diversity in the experiences of the good man and the practices of the wicked; all we like sheep have gone astray, yet every one chooses his *own* way. Or as the excellent Watts expresses it:

> "Each wandering in a different way,
> But all the downward road."

Dr. Derham remarks on the great variety throughout the world of men's faces, voices,* and handwriting. "Had man's body been made according to any of the atheistical schemes, or any other

* As the difference of tone makes a difference between every man's voice, of the same country, yea, family, so a different dialect and pronunciation differs persons of divers countries, yea, persons of one and the same country, speaking the same language: thus in Greece, there were the Ionic, Doric, Attic, and Æolic dialects. So in Great Britain, besides the grand diversity of English and Scots, the different counties vary very much in their pronunciation, accent, and tone, although all one and the same language. And the way of the Gileadites proving the Ephraimites, Judges xii. 6. by the pronunciation of Shibboleth, with a Schin, Sibboleth with a Samech, is well known. So a Lapide saith, the Flem-

method than that of the infinite Lord of the world, this wise variety would never have been: but men's faces would have been cast in the same, or not a very different mould; their organs of speech would have sounded the same, or not so great a variety of notes; and the same structure of muscles and nerves would have given the hand the same direction in writing. And in this case, what confusion, what disturbance, what mischiefs, would the world eternally have lain under! No security could have been to our persons; no certainty, no enjoyment of our possessions; no justice between man and man; no distinction between good and bad, between friends and foes, between father and child, husband and wife, male or female; but all would have been turned topsyturvy, by being exposed to the malice of the envious and ill-natured, to the fraud and violence of knaves and robbers, to the forgeries of the crafty cheat, to the lusts of the effeminate and debauched, and what not! Our courts of justice can abundantly testify the dire effects of mistaking men's faces, of counterfeiting their hands, and forging writings. But now, as the infinitely wise Creator and ruler hath ordered the matter, every man's face can distinguish him in the light, and his voice in the dark; his handwriting can speak for him though absent, and be his witness, and secure his contracts in future generations. A manifest, as well as admirable indication of the divine superintendence and management."†

ings prove whether a man be a Frenchman or not, by bidding him pronounce Acht en tachtenticht; which they pronounce, Act en tactentick by reason they cannot pronounce the aspirate H.

† To the foregoing instances of divine management, with relation to the political state of man, I shall add another thing, that I confess hath always seemed to me somewhat odd, but very providential; and that is, the value that mankind, at least the civilized part of them, have in all ages put upon gems, and the purer finer metals, gold and silver; so as to think them equivalent unto, and exchange them for things of the greatest use, for food, clothing, and all other necessaries and conveniences of life. Whereas those things themselves are of very little, if any use, in physic, food, building, or clothing, otherwise than for ornament, or to minister to luxury.

THE MIGRATION OF SEEDS.

Colles feraces, et feri	Ye mountains near the skies
Montes et omnes arbores;	With lofty cedars there;
Seu montibus rigescitis,	And trees of humble size,
Seu cultibus mansuescitis,	That fruit in plenty bear.
Laudate Dominum.	Praise ye the Lord.

Into our Intelligencer of this month we introduce an extract from Barton's Elements of Botany, partly with a view of inspiring our youthful readers with a sense of the glory of that God whose wonders in the vegetable world, the learned professor has so well succeeded in tracing; but chiefly as a preface to some observations on the migration of that spiritual seed with which the whole earth must be sown and in whose diffusion causes of astonishment are found far beyond those which creation supplies.

THE God of nature has employed various modes for effecting the diffusion of the seeds of vegetables over the surface of the earth. The principal of these modes are the following, viz.

I. Rivers, and other running waters. The seeds of many vegetables are carried along by rivers, and torrents, and the ocean, and are frequently conveyed to the distance of many hundred, or thousand, miles from the countries in which they were originally placed. In this manner, many of the plants of Germany are conveyed to the shores of the sea in Sweden; various plants of Spain and France are carried to the shores of Britain; and the plants of Africa and Asia are often conveyed to the shores of Italy. Sir Hans Sloane has given an account of four kinds of fruits, which are frequently thrown, by the sea, upon the coasts of the islands of the northern parts of Scotland. These seeds, or fruits, were Mimosa scandens; Horse-eye-bean (Dolichos pruriens), Ash-coloured Nickar-tree (Guilandina Bonduc), and the "Fructus orbicularis sulcis nervisque distinctus"* of Caspar Bauhin. All these are American vegetables;† and three of them were known by Sloane to be natives of Jamaica. These and several other kinds of seeds, which are, likewise, found abundantly upon the coasts of Norway, were thought by our author to have been brought by currents, through the gulph of Florida, into the North-American

* Strychnos colubrina? of Linnæus.

† They are likewise, natives of the East-Indies.

ocean. Dr. Tonning has mentioned several other seeds which are annually thrown upon the coasts of Norway: such as those of Cashew-nut (Anacardium occidentale), Bottle-gourd (Cucurbita legenaria), Dog-wood-tree (Piscidia Erythrina), and Cocoa-nut (Cocos butyracea). These are often in so recent a state, that they would, unquestionably, vegetate, were the climate favourable to their growth and existence. And, doubtless, they are frequently carried to countries in which they do vegetate as well as in the countries where they were originally placed, by the hands of the Creator.

Dr. Darwin observes, that the fact of the emigration of these seed is "truly wonderful, and cannot be accounted for but by the existence of under currents in the depths of the ocean; or from vortexes of water passing from one country to another through caverns of the earth." It does not, however, I think, seem necessary to adopt this conjecture of the English poet; but I can, with great pleasure refer my readers to his lines on the voyage of Cassia from the "brineless tides" of Lake-Ontario, to the coasts of Norway.*

2. Winds. I have already taken notice of the dispersion of plants by means of the winds.† It is hardly necessary to say any thing further on the subject, in this place. I may observe, however, that the vegetables which are carried by the wind, are either winged as in Fir-tree (Pinus Abies), in Trumpet-flower, (Bignonia radicans), Tulip-tree (Liriodendron Tulipifera), Arbor vitæ (Thuya occidentalis), and some of the Umbelliferæ, not to mention many others: or they are furnished with an aigrette, as in the plants formerly enumerated, when treating of this part;‡ or they are placed within a winged calyx, or pericarp; as in Statice Armeria, Ash, Maple, Elm, Log-wood, Woad (Isatis); or, lastly, they are contained within a swelled calyx or seed-vessel; as in Ground-cherry (Physalis viscosa, &c.), Melilot (Trifolium Melilotus), Bladder-nut (Staphylea trifolia), Bladder-sena (Colutea arborescens), Heart-seed (Cardiospermum), and many others.— With respect to all these vegetables, it is certain, that, owing to the peculiar structure of their pericarps or seeds, they are very

* The Loves of the Plants. Canto iii. l. 411. 418.

† See pages 242, &c.

‡ See pages 239—241.

extensively diffused over the surface of the earth; and in this way, there can be no doubt, that we are to explain the circumstance of many of these vegetables being found in remote and opposite parts of the globe, as in North-America and Asia. Thus, the Erigeron canadense, or Canadian Flea-bane, which was brought to Europe, in the seventeenth century, has spread over a great part of that continent; and the Common-Dandelion is often seen growing upon the highest towers of towns and cities. This last-mentioned vegetable is not, I think, a native of North-America, but it has already been carried to very distant parts of the continent, and, in a few years, will be as extensively diffused as any of our vegetables.

3. Birds and other animals are no mean agents in the dissemination of vegetables. Birds, in particular, are greatly instrumental in this business. They swallow the seeds, which they discharge entire, and thus scatter them, with their excrements, over the face of the earth. In this manner, the seeds of Common-Misletoe, and those of some species of Loranthus, are deposited in the crevices of the barks of vegetables, where they grow, and continue to receive their nourishment. In the United States, the former of these vegetables is very frequently found growing, as a parasite, to the branches of the Sour-Gum (Nyssa integrifolia), the Apple-tree, and others. Different species of Turdus, or Thrush, are especially concerned in its diffusion. Loranthus americanus, which is a native of the West-Indies, is deposited upon the branches of the most lofty trees, particularly Coccoloba grandifolia; where it is most firmly fixed, and, unquestionably, receives its nourishment from the supporting vegetable.* Rumphius assures us, that a particular species of Pigeon is very instrumental in disseminating the true Nutmeg in the East-India islands. It is in this way, that the Poke (Phytolacca decandra), the berries of which are eaten by the Robin (Turdus migratorius), the Thrush (Turdus rufus), the Wild-Pigeon (Columba migratoria), and many others, appears to have been so extensively diffused through North-America. The Rev. Mr. Robinson, in his *Natural History of Westmoreland and Cumberland*, has very particularly mentioned a thick grove of Oak-trees, which were known to have sprung from the acorns

* Professor N. J. Jacquin.

that had been planted by a great number of crows, about twenty-five years before. Of the North-American birds, that are known to us, no one, I believe, is more instrumental in planting groves of Oaks, and other tress, than the Crested-Crow, or Jay-bird (Corvus cristatus), which is extremely provident in laying up great stores of acorns, and other seeds, in the holes of fence-posts, and other similar places. There seems to be little doubt, that the very regular growth of many of our forest-trees along the courses of fences, is to be ascribed, in part, to the agency of this and other species of birds, as well as some species of quadrupeds.

Besides the birds, many other animals have been greatly instrumental in the dispersion of the seeds of vegetables. Squirrels, Rats, and other animals, suffer many of the seeds which they have devoured to escape, and thus disseminate them. Our Indians are of opinion, that the squirrels plant *all* the timber of the country. This I do not suppose; but it is certain, that they contribute not a little to this end, by depositing in the earth, for food, store-houses of various kinds of nuts and seeds, such as those of the Chesnut, Oaks of different kinds, Walnuts and Hickery-nuts, the seeds of the Common Dogwood (Cornus florida), and many others. Immense numbers of these seeds, even though there were not a great destruction of the squirrels, would vegetate, and grow to a good size. But as there is annually a prodigious destruction of these quadrupeds, whose forests cannot but spring from the stores which they have laid up. It has, indeed, been asserted,* that the Striped Dormouse, or Ground-Squirrel (Sciurus striatus), previously to depositing, in the earth, its winter food, takes the precaution of depriving "each kernel of its germ, that it may not sprout." Were this assertion founded in truth, it would constitute one of the most interesting facts in the history of animal instinct, or reason. But, although the little quadruped of which I am speaking, may, on many occasions, deprive the kernel of its germ, or embryo (not, I presume, to prevent its growth, but because the embryo, in almost all seeds, has a very delicate and agreeable taste), it is certain, that, in the greater number of instances, no such mutilation of the seed is accomplished, and that,

* By my very respectable friend, the late Dr. Jeremy Belknap, of Boston.

therefore, innumerable seeds, that have been planted by animals, may, and actually do, grow into trees, and other vegetables.

Animals contribute to the dispersion of seeds in still another way. The seeds of many plants attach themselves to animals, especially quadrupeds, by means of hooks, crotchets, or hairs, which are either affixed to the seeds themselves; as in Hounds-tongue (Cynoglossum), Mouse-ear (Myosotis), Vervain, Water-Hemp-Agrimony (Bidens), and many others; to their calyx, as in Burdock (Arctium Lappa), Agrimony, Rhexia, Dock (Rumex), Nettle, Pelletory (Parietaria), Linnæa, &c. &c.; or to the pericarp, or seed-vessel, as in Liquorice (Glycyrrhiza), Enchanter's Night-shade (Circæa), Cleavers (Galium Aparine), Triumfetta Bartramia, Martynia, Pea-Vines (Hedysara, of various species), not to mention many others. In this manner, there can be no doubt, that many seeds are very extensively diffused over vast tracts of country. Thus, there are good reasons to believe, that neither Common Hounds-tongue (Cynoglossum officinale), nor Burdock, are natives of the United States: but both of these plants, which appear to have spread in the manner I have mentioned, are now to be seen in many of the most remote parts of the Union.

The very incorruptible nature of the seeds of plants, is a circumstance highly favourable to their migration.* We have seen, that the seeds of Misletoe, Loranthus, Poke, and others, vegetate very well, after they have been subjected to the digestive power of birds. Nay, it is a fact, that some seeds, when carried to a distance from their native countries, have generally refused to vegetate, until they have been passed through the alimentary canal of birds. In Britain, this was found to be the case with the seeds of the Common Magnolia, or Beaver-tree, (Magnolia glauca). This fact will excite less surprise, when it is recollected, how extremely tenacious seeds are of the vital principle; or, in other words, how difficult it is to prevent seeds from living. Thus, the late illustrious Spallanzani discovered, that there are certain kinds of seeds, which do not refuse to vegetate, even after having undergone the operation of boiling in water; and Duhamel mentions an instance of seeds germinating after they had experienced, in a stove, a heat of 235 degrees by the scale of Farenheit. Spallan-

* J. J. Plenck. Physiologia et Pathologia Plantarum, p. 92. Viennæ, 1794. 8vo.

zani even found, that the seed of mould, which is a true vegetable, survive a heat infinitely greater than this. We are, moreover, well assured, that the seeds of certain species of plants, after having been preserved in the cabinets of the curious, for whole centuries, have vegetated very readily, when committed to the earth, or when simply irrigated with water.

4. Many seeds are dispersed to a considerable distance by means of an elastic force, which resides in some part of the fructification. In the Oat, and in the greater number of the Ferns, this elasticity is resident in the calyx. In Centaurea Crupina, it resides in the pappus, or aigrette; whilst, in many others, such as Geranium, Herb-Bennet (Geum urbanum), Fraxinella (Dictamnus albus), Touch-me-not (Impatiens), Cucumber (Cucumis), Wild-Cucumber (Momordica), Horse-tail (Equisetum), and many others, it resides in the capsule. The pericarp of Impatiens consists of one cell with five divisions, each of which, when the seed are ripe, upon being touched, suddenly folds itself into a spiral form, leaps from the stem, and scatters, by virtue of this elastic property, its seeds to a great distance.

The pericarp of the Geranium, and the beard of the Wild-Oat (Avena fatua), are twisted, doubtless, for a similar purpose, and, being extremely sensible to the changes of the atmosphere, readily dislodge their seeds on wet days, when the earth is best fitted to receive them. Advantage has been taken of this property of the pericarp of the Geranium, of which an ingenious and neat hygrometer has been constructed.* The Wild-Oat called "Walking-Oat," is now familiarly known to every body. The awn (arista) of the Barley is furnished with stiff points, which are all turned towards the point of it, like the teeth of a saw. As this long awn lies upon the ground, it extends itself, during the prevalence of the moist night-air, and pushes forwards the grain of Barley which it adheres to. In the day-time, it shortens as it dries, "and as these points prevent it from receding, it draws up its pointed end; and thus, creeping like a worm, will travel many feet from the parent stem." Surely, these facts may, with some propriety, be mentioned as instances of the migration of the seeds of plants.

* See Dr. Withering's Botanical Arrangement, &c. Vol. III. p. 597 and 598.

Lord Herbert did not pretend to deny the divinity of the gospel; he even declared, that he had no intention to attack christianity, which he calls, in express terms, the *best religion;* and which, according to his own confession, tends to establish the five great articles of that universal, sufficient, and absolutely perfect religion, which he pretends to deduce from reason and nature. But notwithstanding these fair professions, his lordship loses no occasion of throwing out insinuations against all revealed religion, as absolutely uncertain, and of little or no use. But this same deist, who was the first, and, indeed, the least contemptible of that tribe in *England*, has left upon record one of the strongest instances of fanaticism and absurdity that perhaps ever has been heard of, and of which he himself was guilty. This instance is preserved in a manuscript life of Lord Herbert, drawn up from memorials penned by himself, which is now in the possession of a gentleman of distinction, and is as follows: That lord having finished his book *De Veritate*, apprehended that he should meet with much opposition, and was, consequently, dubious for some time whether he would not be prudent to suppress it. "Being thus doubtful, *says his lordship*, in my chamber (*at Paris, where he was ambassador in the year* 1624,) one fair day in the summer, my casement being open towards the south, the sun shining clear, and no wind stirring, I took my book *De Veritate* in my hands, and, kneeling on my knees, devoutly said these words: *O thou Eternal God, author of this light that now shines upon me, and Giver of all inward illumination, I do beseech thee, of thine infinite goodness, to pardon a greater request than a sinner ought to make: I am not satisfied enough whether I shall publish this book; if it be for thy glory, I beseech thee to give me some* SIGN FROM HEAVEN; *if not I shall suppress it.*" What does the reader now think of this cornerstone of deism, who demands a *supernatural revelation* from heaven in favour of a book that was designed to prove *all* revelation *uncertain* and *useless?* But the absurdity does not end here; for our deist not only *sought* for this revelation, but also *obtained* it, if we are to believe him. Let us, at least, hear him. "I had no sooner, *says he*, spoken these words, but a *loud*, though yet *gentle* noise came forth from the heavens (for it was like nothing on earth,) which did so cheer and comfort me, that I took my petition as granted." Rare credulity this in an unbeliever! but these gen-

tlemen can believe even against reason, when it answers their purpose. His lordship continues, "This however strange it may seem, I protest, before the Eternal God, is true; neither am I superstitiously deceived herein," &c. See LELAND'S *View of the Deistical Writers*, &c. vol. i. p. 470, &c.*

REFLECTIONS ON GALATIANS. iv. 10.

Ye observe days and months and times and years. From the motion of the heavenly bodies, and from that of the earth we inhabit, the divisions of time are derived. A *day* is the period in which the earth performs a revolution on its axis; a *month* is that in which the moon accomplishes her journey round the earth; a *year* is employed by the earth for the completion of its circle round the central sun. *Time* is a term used in the divine word to signify a natural year; seven times or seven years passed over Nebuchadnezzar in disgrace and misery; or to intimate a prophetic year amounting to 360 common years. A time, times and the dividing of a time, meaning three prophetic years and a half, equaling 1260 years. Dan. vii. 25. Rev. xii. 6. 14. and xiii. 5.

In heaven no such distinctions shall exist. The earth will have discontinued its revolutions. The moon and the sun will travel no more. They shall be changed into darkness and blood; and time be lost in eternity.

The words of the apostle may be uttered in *the tone of censure. Ye observe days*, &c. "*I am afraid of you*," says Paul "*lest* I have bestowed *labour on you in vain*." Religiously to regard certain seasons was common under the Jewish economy. *Days* were observed, as in the daily sacrifice. Exod. xxix. 38. 45. *months* were regarded; as a day of thankfulness for the mercies of another moon, the feast of new moons was appointed. Numb. x. 10. Special *times* were attended to as the feast of purim and the feast of dedication. The solemnities of the passover and pentecost, of the trumpets and tabernacles, of the *year* of release at the expiration of seven years, and of the year of jubilee at the end of fifty, were piously observed by the Jewish nation. To draw off the attention of the Jews from these services under the economy of the gospel was the object of apostolic labours. This was done by evincing

* In reading the above account, let the reader recollect what St. Paul says in 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

that the mosaic ritual was abolished, having its fulfilment in the Messias. Thus Colossians ii. 16, 17. the apostle says "*let no man, therefore, judge you in meat or in drink or in respect of a holiday, or of the new moon or of the sabbath days, which are shadows of things to come, but the body is of Christ.*" Notwithstanding this holy exertion, many still adhered to these rites, for the most faithful and laborious of the servants of God cannot insure to themselves the success they desire. The principal obstacles to the spread of correct ideas were certain false and interested teachers, whom Paul in this epistle terms "troublers," "perverters of the gospel of Christ," "false brethren" and "spies." In opposition to whom he teaches that good men under the law were *servants* in bondage, under a governor, or pupils learning "elements" under a tutor. Chap. iv. 6. 9. But they are now sons; they have now become educated. Is it then degrading to sink from the son to the servant, from the educated into the ignorant? this the Galatians would do if they observed *days and months and weeks, and years.*

Under a censure of this nature, the Jews fall in the present day. The veil is on their heart when Moses is read; and they sedulously observe what God has repealed. This censure falls on all astrologers and soothsayers whether ancient or modern. The distinction of days into fortunate or unfortunate, the word of God never sanctions. Attention to follies of this kind was expressly forbidden the Jews, Leviticus xix. 26.; and in the violation of the law of God on this point one of Manasseh's leading offences consisted. 2 Kings xxi. 6. Missionaries among the heathen have to witness the prevalence of these absurdities. On certain days a Hindoo will commence no business, form no engagements and listen to no advice.

Men of God are swayed by different ideas. Daniel among the Babylonian astrologers rejoiced and said "Blessed be the God of heaven for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his. He changeth the times and the seasons; he knoweth what is in the darkness; and the light dwelleth with him." Daniel ii. 19. 21. Paul taught the too superstitious Athenians that "God who made the world and all things therein hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of our habitation." Acts, xvii. 25. Absurdities resembling those of the heathen prevail even in the christian world. Probably, because the Roman church has ordained that every Friday throughout the year be a fast, in memory of the crucifixion of Christ; the day is generally regarded as an unhappy

one. The mariner is sure, he thinks, of an unsuccessful voyage if he set sail on a Friday; forgetful that the great Columbus left the shores of Europe on that day, on his successful expedition to discover America. How much is it to be lamented that superstition can hinder men from going to sea on a day quite indifferent, while the fear of God has no effect in preventing the violation of the day which he claims to himself. The merchant and captain, who uniformly make choice of the sabbath, for weighing the anchor and hoisting the sail, will hereafter know that "verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

The words before us may be uttered with the *tone* of *indifference*. "Ye observe days and months and times and years," and your conduct has in it nothing immediately worthy of blame or praise. The keeping of *birth days*, especially by the princes of the earth, has long been practised. We read of the birth-days of Pharaoh, Gen. xl. 20. and of Herod, Mat. xiv. 6. These are usually devoted to dissipation and in a way of example, produce in society the most mischievous effects. The prophet Hosea strikingly describes a birth-day frolic, Chap. vii. "They made the king glad with their wickedness and the princes with their lies. In the *day* of our king, the princes have made him sick with bottles of wine; he stretched out his hand with scorners. They are all hot as an oven, there is none among them that calleth upon me. Ephraim hath mixed himself among the people." The beheading of one of the greatest prophets of God was the consequence of the revel of a birth-day. If a man be still living in sin, there is nothing in the return of the day of his birth that ought to inspire exultation. If in sin he die, it had been "good for him he had never been born." With a melancholy beyond what Job ever felt, he has reason to say, "Let the day perish wherein I was born; let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let the blackness of the day terrify it; let it not be joined to the days of the year. Lo, let that night be solitary; let no joyful voice come therein. Why died I not from the womb!" Nevertheless, if a birth-day be kept with temperance and love; if its recurrence be made use of to remind us of the flight of time, of the wisdom of improving it, and of our hasty approach to an eternal state; if it call to our remembrance the mercies we have received and the ingratitude we have returned; if it incite our confidence in the providence of him who hath led us and fed us from our youth up, and especially if it

awaken self examination whether or not we have experienced a second birth, without which we cannot see the kingdom of God, its observance will become profitable.

Attention to days for religious festival may be viewed with indifference. A christmas day, for instance, is merely of human appointment. If some good men choose to observe it, censure them not; if others disapprove of the day, "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not a day to the Lord, he doth not regard it." Sir Isaac Newton on the prophecies of Daniel, affords some interesting information on this subject. He says, "The times of the birth and passion of Christ, with such like little niceties, being not *material to religion*, were little regarded by christians of the first age; they who first began to celebrate them, placed them in the cardinal periods of the year; as the annunciation of the Virgin Mary on the 25th of March, which, when Julius Cesar corrected the calendar was the vernal equinox: the feast of John the Baptist on the 24th of June, which was the summer solstice; the feast of St. Michael on September 29th or the autumnal equinox, and the birth of Christ on the winter solstice, December 25th." "So also at the entrance of the sun into all the signs of the Julian calendar, they placed the days of other saints; as the conversion of Paul on January 25, when the sun entered Aquarius; St. Matthias on February 25, when he entered Pisces. St. Mark on April 25, when he entered Taurus; Corpus Christi on May 26, when he entered Gemini; St. James on July 25, when he entered Cancer; St. Bartholomew on August 24, when he entered Virgo; Simon and Jude on October 28, when he entered Scorpio: and if there were any other remarkable days in the Julian calendar, they placed their saints upon them: As St. Barnabas on June 11, where Ovid seems to place the feast of Vesta and Fortuna and the goddess Matuta; and St. Philip and James on the first of May, a day dedicated to the Bona Dea or Magna Mater, and to the goddess Flora, and still celebrated with her rites. *All which shows that these days were fixed in the first christian calendars by mathematicians at pleasure without any ground in tradition, and that the christians afterwards took up with what they found in the calendars.*"

The learned Fabricius gives a catalogue of 136 different opinions concerning the *year* of the birth of Christ; while the *day* has

by different chronologers been referred to almost every month. The Egyptians placed it in January; Wagenseil in February or in August, Bochart in March; Clement of Alexandria mentions some who prefer April or May, and Epiphanius others who approve of June or July. Lightfoot fixes on the 15th of September; Scaliger, Casaubon and Calvisius in October; but the Latin Church, supreme in power, has determined that Christ was born of the Virgin, on the 25th of December. The time of the birth of Jesus Christ is to christians very indifferent.

But with the *tone of approbation* the words may be uttered, "Ye observe days and months and times and years" and you do well. The christian sabbath is a day the Lord has made and the saints should rejoice and be glad in it. Sabbath-breaking will not be practised with impunity. It is commendable also that we observe the signs of the times and the calculations the word of God supplies relative to the triumphs of the church. To be positive in our conclusions as if the scriptures were intended to convert us into prophets is wrong. The keys of time hang only at the girdle of Jesus; but at the same time "blessed is he that waiteth to the thousand three hundred and fifty days;" blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of prophecy.

Days of fasting or thanksgiving appointed by public authority or recommended by the ministers of Jesus, ought to be regarded. Judgments and mercies loudly call for such sacred services. In a word, it will be happy for each believer to adopt the language of his Master, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh in which no man can work."

For the Evangelical Magazine.

TEMPTATION.

A Letter from an affectionate Father to his Son.

My Dear Son,

The frequent prayers your dear mother and myself have offered for your eternal salvation we trust are answered. You have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, and have taken upon yourself the vows of God. Permit me to pour forth the affections of my heart in a few salutary cautions. I have myself trodden the mazes, and witnessed the dangers of

the path of youth, and am qualified as much by experience as by natural and strong attachment to afford you instruction.

The injunction of our gracious Saviour to his disciples, which has often been serviceable to myself, permit me to recommend to you; "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." There are two senses in which the word "temptation" is used in the word of God; to signify the trial of grace and enticements to sin. In the first sense the term is employed, Gen. xxii. 1. and James i. 2 and 12. against temptations or trials of this kind we are not to pray. We must say, "the will of the Lord be done," and even "count it all joy when we fall" into them: but the second is the more frequent meaning of the term to which our Lord's command has respect.

Among those who tempt to sin, the great God must never be classed, James i. 14. "Let no man say when he is tempted I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." Holy angels never tempt men, on the contrary they rejoice when from the power of the adversary a sinner is delivered. The seducers against whom, my dear son, it is your duty to pray, are the devil, your fellow creatures and yourself. Satan is called the tempter, 1 Thess. iii. 5. Lies he minds not, he will put on the angel of light at pleasure. Labour he minds not, but "goeth about" to effect his malignant designs. Him "resist stedfast in the faith." Your fellow creatures my child will seduce you, if they can. The first seven chapters of the book of Proverbs appear to have been composed peculiarly for youth. Permit me to use to you the words of Solomon to Rehoboam, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. Particularly beware of the arts of the unchaste woman." By these Sampson was vanquished, but over them Joseph was victorious. Read the story of the young man void of understanding; a story which, as Mr. Henry observes, "would serve the lewd, profane poets of our age to make a *play* of: and the harlot with them would be a heroine: but Solomon relates it and all good men will read it as a melancholy story." The tempter appears in the attire of a harlot, she is subtle of heart, loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house. She has her "peace offerings," and makes mention of them to show her seeming piety and her abundance. A strong affection is pretended, and providence supposed to favour her. "I came forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have

found thee." She says, the "*good man*," (not her husband) is absent, he has "his bag of money" with him, and will not return till "the day appointed." Her wiles succeed. "He goeth after her as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life."

We may prove our own tempters. "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." The apostle says, "the spirit that is *in you* lusteth to envy." It is an excellent remark of John Bunyan, "the idle man tempts the devil to tempt him."

As the object or aim of temptation is sin, it is evident there may be as many temptations as there are transgressions. If our sins are more in number than the hairs of our head, our solicitations to evil may be also. We may be tempted to break each precept of the moral law; to have other gods before Jehovah; to take his name in vain, to disregard his sabbaths, to dishonour our parents, a crime against which the displeasure of God is pointedly directed. There may be temptation to murder, to theft, to slander and to covetousness. In like manner the enemy may try to beguile us to impenitence, unbelief and atheism itself.

Man is composed of a *body* and a *spirit;* and each of these may be assailed. To gratify the body there may be a yielding to lust and drunkenness, or to pride in beauty, symmetry or strength. Vain in his understanding, a sinful creature is easily seduced to exalt his reason above revelation; obstinate in his will, he may rage as a wild bull in the net when God chastises; carnal and vagrant in his affections, he is easily enticed to hate what he ought to love and to love what he ought to hate.

There are, however, circumstances that appear adapted more than others to the accomplishment of the designs of the enemy. Such are *solitude;* Eve was absent from her husband when the devil prevailed: *darkness* the black night is the favourite of the thief and adulterer; to them the morning is as the shadow of death; and *constitutional propensity*, each having his *sin* that *easily besets* him. A sense of injury or of kindness received, a state of poverty or wealth, reputation or disgrace, ease or affliction, may each furnish opportunities for the assault of our common foe. The master may be tempted to severity, and the servant to un-

faithfulness; the parent to excessive fondness, and the child to ingratitude.

You, my son, are under no temptation to covetousness, as is an old man; but you may be borne away by a no less injurious one. Confident of your strength and presuming on years to come, you may mock at economy, and welcome those extravagancies which may with shallows and miseries afflict the whole of your future voyage through life.

When first you began to seek the Lord, you recited to me the various temptations you felt; at one time you were led to conclude that you were too young to need salvation, and at another that you were too old to obtain it. Now you thought the way to heaven quite simple and easy, and now it appeared a steep up which you had no ladder to climb, no wings to fly. Similar assaults you may yet look for. To spiritual pride, to vanity in your gifts or attainments, you are exposed. When you increase in years you may be led to despise those who are your juniors in religion; and pleased with the increase of your knowledge, forget that communion with God and love to the saints are some of the most divine exercises of the christian life.

I purpose, my dear son, to write to you again shortly, as my avocations may admit. I have here opened to your view many of the temptations to which the saint is exposed. I will endeavour to show you the means by which through grace they may be avoided or surmounted. Your dear mother and myself, and many more of the children of God will not cease to pray for you. She desires her affectionate love. Expect to hear again shortly from, my dear son, your anxious and loving father. O.

AVOID FOOLISH QUESTIONS.

Sermonizing was so much the fort of the late Rev. B. Beddome of Bourton, England, that at length when knowledge had received maturity from years, and composition was familiarized by habit; he has been known, with a wonderful facility of the moment, to sketch his picture at the foot of the pulpit stairs, to colour it as he was ascending, and, without turning his eyes from the canvas, in the same hour, to give it all the finish of a master. One instance of this will long be remembered, which happened at a meeting at Fairford, in Gloucestershire. After public service

began, his natural timidity, it seems, overcame his recollection.—His text and his discourse, (for he did not preach by notes,) had left him; and in the way from the pew to the pulpit, he leaned his head over the shoulder of the Rev. Mr. Davis, pastor of the place, and said, "Brother Davis, what must I preach from?" Mr. Davis, thinking he could not be at a loss, answered, *Ask no foolish questions.* This became the occasion of the following discourse, for Mr. Beddome turned immediately to the Text,—

Titus, iii. 9. *Avoid foolish questions.*

THIS scripture recommends a duty but little regarded, yet incumbent upon all men, and especially upon professors of religion, whose conduct is remarked, whose example, be it good or bad, is most likely to be influential, and who should therefore set a double watch upon the door of their lips, lest they offend with their tongues. Here it may be proper to show what we are to understand by foolish questions, and to lay down rules for avoiding them.

By foolish questions we may understand,

1. Those which savour of scepticism and infidelity; or in other words, which betray a disbelief of any of the great and fundamental articles of either natural or revealed religion. Such was that of the Sadducees; when speaking of a woman that had seven husbands, they asked, *Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection?* Matth. xxii. 28. To which Christ returned a very wise answer; showing that carnal relations and sensual enjoyments are incompatible with the glory of the heavenly state, and that marriages will not take place when the ends of marriage are no longer to be answered. Such also was that question, *How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?* 1 Cor. xv. 35. Hence the apostle calls the proposer of this question a fool, as being ignorant both of the greatness of the divine power, and the truth of the divine promises. Under this head I may class those questions that despondding christians are apt to put to themselves or others; questions that carry distrust and incredulity in the very face of them. You will find a specimen of such in the lxxviith psalm:—Will the Lord cast off for ever? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? v. 7, 8.

2. Knotty and controversial questions, gendering only to strife and contention, about the being and perfections of God, and the

hypostatical union of the two natures in the person of Christ. How the divine presence can consist with the freedom of the human will, or the exhortations and invitations of the word with the impotency of the creature and the absolute decrees of heaven. How the stain of original sin is communicated, and what would have been the kind and degree of man's happiness if he had never apostatized from God. These and many such questions have puzzled the wit of learned men, and greatly disturbed the peace of the churches of Christ. To all which the humble, pious christian, contented with what God has revealed, and not seeking to be wise above what is written, will say with the psalmist, *such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it.* psalm cxxxix. 6. As it is the glory of God to conceal a thing, so it is our duty to be willing that it should be concealed.

3. Curious and impertinent questions, which may relate either to ourselves, to others, or to futurity.

(1.) *To ourselves.* Thus the disciples wanted to know who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, Matth. xviii. 1, &c. each of them, perhaps, hoping that the reply would be in his favour; but Christ reproves their pride, ambition, and affectation of preferment, teaching them that a child-like temper is most acceptable to God; and that those, who are the least covetous of honour, are most likely to attain to it.—ver. 8, &c.

(2.) *To others.* Such was that question of Peter concerning John, *What shall this man do?* John, xxi. 22. Shall he not bear the cross as well as I? Shall he have no share in the sufferings that others endure? Christ was not pleased with the question, and therefore returned not a direct but discouraging answer: *What is that to thee?* mind thine own business, attend to thine own concerns, *follow thou me.*

(3.) *To futurity.* As Matth. xxiv. 3. *When shall these things be?* and Acts, i. 6. *Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?* in both which places Christ discovers a dislike to the question proposed; and in the latter of them, forbids all inquiries of that nature: *It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power.* It is not proper, it would not be profitable, for you to know them; and therefore you are out of your duty to inquire after them. A knowledge of future events would be so far from promoting our advantage, that it would be greatly injurious to us. It would multiply and aggra-

vate our afflictions, lessen our miseries, sometimes lead to presumption, and at other times drive to despair. Our times are in Gods's hand, and they cannot be in a better hand. It is pity we should endeavour to wrest them from thence, and take them into our own. Under this head I might mention questions concerning the unloosing the seals, pouring out the vials, the downfal of antichrist, the calling of the Jews, and many other things foretold in scripture: the things themselves are certain, but the time to us is uncertain; and therefore to inquire after them may betray a culpable, and what has often proved a fruitless curiosity.

4. To these may be added questions arising from a froward, fretful, peevish, and discontented temper of mind, uneasy in itself, and therefore uneasy with every thing round about it. Thus Isaiah, xlv. 9. *Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?* This discovers both a depraved and an infatuated heart, and is an instance not only of great imprudence, but of intolerable insolence. Sooner may a worm compare with an elephant, or a little infant just able to articulate a few words presume to find fault with the conduct of its parent. Shall a sinner quarrel with God? And there is another passage so full to my purpose, that I cannot forbear to mention it, (omitting many others that might be produced, under this head) Eccl. vii. 10. *Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.* That is, it is a foolish question; for though some times and seasons are certainly better than others, yet thou art such a stranger to times past, and such an incompetent judge of times present, so biassed by prejudices and thy own feelings, that what thou thinkest to be a reality may be only the fruit of imagination, and must at best be considered as an arraignment of divine providence. Instead, therefore, of complaining of the badness of the times, mourn over the badness of thine own heart. If men's hearts were better, the times would soon be better. Give me leave just to mention here those angry questions, which are often put by persons not humbled under, but enraged by their afflictions. What have I done, that God should deal thus cruelly to me? Wherein have I acted worse than others, that God should act worse by me than he does by others? Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul, which long for death, and it cometh not? Job, viii. 20. In such questions as these, there

appears not the meekness of wisdom, but the rage of passion, and therefore they should be carefully avoided.

5. Perplexing and disquieting questions respecting the state of our souls, and especially those to which we can receive no satisfactory answer, are foolish questions. To explain my meaning I shall single out the two following:

(1.) *Am I elected?* It is certain that grace here, and glory hereafter, are intended for, and imparted to none but the elect. To this I answer: Election is a secret act of God, and can be known only by its fruits. We are, and must be necessarily ignorant of it, till God is pleased to reveal it; but that ignorance should neither keep the unregenerate man from seeking after grace, nor the regenerate man from taking the comfort of his grace. Our great concern should be this: Are we effectually called? Not, are our names written in heaven? but is God's law written upon our hearts? It may be said of election as Zophar says of the knowledge of God: *It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper as hell, what canst thou know?*

(2.) *When was the time of my conversion to God?* Many fear that they are not savingly changed, because they cannot point out the precise *time* when that change was wrought; by what providence, or under what sermon they were first awakened; and by what particular promise they were first comforted; and, unless they can fix the *period*, they will scarcely believe the *thing*. But this is very absurd and irrational. Shall I say that the sun does not shine, because I was asleep when it rose, or, that there is no water in the stream, because I do not see the fountain. God may sow the seeds of grace imperceptibly, as the enemy did the tares. Matth. xiii. 25. And we read of some sanctified from the womb. If the tree yield fruit, it is alive; if good fruit, it is a good a tree. *The kingdom of God*, saith he who is the head of that kingdom, and therefore perfectly acquainted with its nature, *cometh not with observation*. To which I add, that though the infusing of life into a dead soul is an instantaneous work in its own nature, yet it may seem to be gradual with respect to our apprehension, and sensible experience of it. Perplexing questions for conscience sake, as the apostle expresses it, 1 Cor. x. 27., concerning things indifferent, or the use and abuse of christian liberty, might have been added under this head. But I proceed,

6. And lastly to say, idle, frivolous, and unprofitable questions, are such as the apostle may have a particular eye to, and brand with the epithet of foolish in my text. Questions that do not tend to the enlightening the understanding, the purifying the heart, or reforming the life. Weak, silly, and ridiculous, and much more indecent and immodest questions. It is said, that an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, produceth evil things; and among these evil things may be reckoned many of those unedifying questions *about words and names*, as Gallio speaks, Acts xviii. 15. Things of no moment and concern either to us, or to those with whom we converse. To which I may add insnaring questions, like that of the Pharisees to Christ. *Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?* or ill-natured questions which are designed to do an injury to the character of our neighbour. In a word, all those questions, which are calculated only to fill up the void of time, which a wise man would not put, and to which a wise man would scarcely vouchsafe an answer. Now these the apostle advises to avoid; and instead of any other improvement of what has been delivered, I shall proceed.

IIdly. To lay down a few of such rules, as, with the blessing of God (which I humbly implore for that purpose) may render this advice the more effectual.

1. Take heed of loquacity or too much speaking. Let not your tongue go before your wit. Think twice before you speak once. In these respects, the best of men, especially if they be of a free and sociable disposition, are apt to offend; for the tongue is an unruly evil, which no man can tame; and if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, James iii. 2. Great talkers are in great danger, and often make work for after repentance: hence Solomon says, He that refraineth his lips is wise. Prov. x. 19.

2. Habituate yourselves to a sober way of thinking and talking, or, as the apostle expresses it, sound speech, which cannot be condemned. Look upon your words, before you speak them; see whether what you are going to say will bear examination; if not, stifle it in the birth; make a covenant with your lips, as Job did with his eyes. The christian should have some particular point in view, as in all that he does, so in all that he says; and that particular point should be his own improvement, his neighbour's edification, but especially God's glory.

3. Lay in a stock of useful questions as matters for after conversation. All questions are not to be condemned. The queen of Sheba, hearing of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, came to prove him with hard questions; 1 Kings x. 1. and the Lord Jesus Christ, when but a child, sat among the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions; so that all present were astonished at his understanding. There are many useful questions we may put to ourselves: Am I in a state of grace, and do I grow in grace? Do I hate sin, and love holiness? What do I think of Christ? Am I increasingly weaned from the world, and fit for heaven? There are also important and improving questions that we may put to others, as Christ to his disciples: Do ye now believe? Whom say ye that I am? It is a proper question for unawakened sinners, What shall I do to be saved? and for real saints, What shall we do to work the works of God?

4. Live in the realizing views of a future judgment. Remember that God remarks what you speak. A book of remembrance is written before him. *They* (says God) *speak not aright*. Jer. viii. 6. And every idle word must be accounted for in the great day. All our vain and unprofitable discourse, as it was never out of God's remembrance, so it will then be brought to ours, Matth. xii. 36. An idle word is easily spoken, and easily forgotten; but the guilt of it, revived in this world, may be an heavy burden, and, if not removed by the blood of Christ, will hereafter sink us down into the dreadful abyss of eternal misery. Thus the apostle, speaking of foolish talking and jesting, says, For these things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience, Eph. v. 6.

5. Implore the divine assistance. Whatever you forget, forget not this; your tongue wants a bridle, and grace must be the bridle. No man can tame it, but God can. Let watchfulness and circumspection, then, be always attended with prayer. Pray against heart sins, life sins, but especially sins of the tongue. Say with David, *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth: keep the door of my lips.* Psalm cxli. 3.

PALEY'S POSTHUMOUS SERMONS.

The character of Paley, as a writer is well known and highly appreciated. In our last number, a few selections from this volume of sermons were inserted, from which it will appear how correct

and evangelical were his sentiments in regard to some very important doctrines of the gospel. But while we express our satisfaction at finding such scriptural sentiments in his writings, we are constrained to say, that we were grieved to find in this volume other sentiments so unscriptural, and so dangerous in their tendency. In his sermon on the love of God, he plainly asserts that religion is acceptable whether it proceed from love or from fear; and he intimates that although love is a more noble, yet it is a less powerful motive than fear. This sentiment stands in direct opposition to the following parts of scripture. If any man, saith St. Paul, "love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema Maranatha." "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, (love) I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." 1 Cor. xiii. 1—3. "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

In his sermon on repentance, he gives it as his opinion, that the classification of mankind into *converted* and *unconverted*, is not judicious; and that there are persons who belong to neither of these two classes; that is, persons who although they have never been converted, yet need not converting grace. This opinion he maintains in the face of that solemn and comprehensive declaration of our Lord, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" which text he takes the liberty to limit, merely because, in its full and just extent, it would condemn his opinion, and would disturb the tranquillity of such as mistake morality for religion, and look upon freedom from vice, as sufficient evidence of a pure heart.

These we consider as errors of dangerous tendency. We bear our testimony against them; and caution those who may feel disposed to read this volume of sermons to beware of being led into error by the celebrity of the writer's name, or by the correctness of his views of some important doctrines of the gospel.

ANECDOTES.

An aged minister was one day riding in company with the infidel Volney, near Lake Erie. The conversation turned upon the variations and uncertainty of the wind. The minister asks the philosopher, "Do you not say that wind is occasioned by the atmosphere becoming rarefied in certain parts; in consequence of which the neighbouring air rushes in for the preservation of an atmospheric equilibrium." "Certainly sir, certainly you are right." "Well, sir, admitting, and I pretend not to dispute the theory, whence does it arise that in the summer season, the wind is mostly south, blowing from lands where the vertical glow of the sun must have rendered the atmosphere extremely rare." "That rejoined the philosopher is a difficulty which we cannot account for; I have seen nothing satisfying on the subject." "Have not you?" added the minister, "I have. There is an old book in my saddlebags, which places the point in as clear a light as I ever expect to find it." "O sir, said Volney I am impatient to see it; can you state the ideas it contains?" "I can sir; it says the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth." "O sir," exclaims the philosopher "that is the Bible!" "To be sure it is; and it contains a mass of sound philosophy not to be obtained in any other volume." Volney gave his horse the whip, and sought, in some company before him, a new theme of conversation.

Burnet, in his Life and Death of the Earl of Rochester, mentions a singular occurrence, in the house of Lady Warre his mother-in-law. The chaplain dreamed that he should die; but being by all the family put out of the belief of it, he had almost forgotten it. The evening before at supper, there being thirteen at table, indulging the conceit that the number was ominous; one of the young ladies pointed to him, and told him he was to die. Remembering his dream, the chaplain fell into some disorder. The lady Warre reproved him for his superstition; but he said he should die before morning; he being, however, in perfect health, his declaration was not much minded. It was Saturday night, and he was to preach the next day. He went to his chamber,

and sat up late, as appeared by the burning of his candle, and had been preparing notes for his sermon; but was found the next morning *dead in his bed*.

This and a similar providence, his biographer says, "led him to believe the soul was a substance, distinct from matter, and this often returned into his thoughts." But that which perfected his persuasion was, that, in the sickness which brought him so near his death, when his spirits were so low and spent that he could not move, and did not expect to live an hour, he said his reason and judgment were so clear and strong, that from thence he was fully persuaded, that death was not the spending or dissolution of the soul, but only the separation of it from matter.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Maryville, Sept. 16, 1808.

Rev. Sir,

The period has at last arrived arrived, on which I have long fixed my eager eye.

The Cherokee nation has at length determined to become men and citizens. Towards this my exertions have been unremittingly directed since the commencement of my mission to them. A few days ago, in full council, they adopted a constitution, which embraces a simple principle of government. The legislative and judicial powers are vested in a general council, and lesser ones subordinate. All criminal accusations must be established by testimony; and no more executions must be made by the avenger of blood; the infliction of punishment is made a govermental transaction. Small companies in each district are to have the power of our sheriffs to apprehend supposed criminals; and to execute according to the decree of the council. This could not be done as with us by an individual, there being no way properly to bind him; it must therefore be done by a company that one may be a check on another.

They have actually made some laws and entered them on record to stand as written laws of the nation; and you would have been astonished at the *etiquette* with which they performed this business; from council to council messages were passing and repassing according to the rules of parliament. One law is that

no murderer shall be punished until he has been proved guilty before the council. Another that all Indians who have stock to a certain number specified, shall pay two dollars annually to support their national government; that every white man in the nation, of every description, shall pay one dollar per annum for the same purpose; and some whose names are mentioned are rated as high as five.

That all Indians shall be obliged to pay for crossing at ferries in the nation, as the whites do; that all ferries are to be taxed for the same purpose, some as high as fifty dollars, some thirty, some twenty, &c.

Laws are likewise enacted to establish their companies as mentioned above and give them their proper power. The laws are in the following style. "Be it enacted by the general council of the Cherokee nation, &c."

I suspect their next step will be the partitioning out their lands, and entering into regular habits of husbandry. Thus far are the Cherokees advanced; further I believe than any other nation of Indians in America. These advantages they cannot lose; and so soon as they are civilized their way will be open for the establishment of regular religious society; may the Lord soon hasten it. This is the most critical and eventful period I have ever seen; it is a time of anxiety to my mind; and a time which calls forth all the energy in the minds of the Indians. I feel, my friend, that I need more grace, and more strength of body and mind for this great business. Money will also be needed. The support of this mission may seem to be at a great expense, but let it be recollected that the object is great; and I hope it will not be lost for want of a little of that treasure which God has so abundantly bestowed on his people. I would cheerfully sacrifice my *little* all, but it is too inconsiderable to add momentum to this machine. I have one of my schools at a sacrament this day; Oh that it may be a day of power amongst them. Excuse haste, excuse blemishes, pray for me; assist me all you can. Tell your female societies to pray for me, and my little Indians. Yours in the gospel of Christ,

GIDEON BLACKBURN.

OBITUARY.

An account of the conversion and happy death of Maria Stockton, of Newark, New-Jersey.

The subject of this memoir was the daughter of the late Rev. Philip Stockton. Descended from respectable and pious parents, she not only was a child of prayer, but enjoyed the advantage of a correct, religious education. What impressions were produced on her mind in early life, the writer of this sketch has not been informed. But in the year 1802, at the time of a revival of religion in Newark, she was, for a little season, seriously affected. After those anxieties had subsided, she sunk into a state of lamentable security, and indulged prejudices against religion. She appeared displeased when serious conversation was introduced, and sometimes would manifest her displeasure in pointed retorts. To use the language of one of her family friends, she was "as averse from religion as any person perhaps on earth," and appeared "utterly opposed to divine things." Moments there were, however, when conscience would be heard. It was heard, but was not obeyed.

When the revival of religion commenced in the town, in the autumn of 1807, she could not endure the doctrines which were preached; and was as ready to treat with levity the operations of the divine Spirit, as to speak against her minister. In this state she continued during the following winter. In the month of March 1808, she was attacked by a disease, which excited serious apprehensions in her friends. But her own mind remained as blind and unconcerned as ever. The admonitions and counsels which were offered her, in this season of alarm, produced no effect, and appeared to be unwelcome. After the lapse of a few weeks, her health was, in a good measure, restored; so that her friends considered her out of danger. She was able to take exercise in the open air, and appeared to be in a very happy course of convalescence. Still her mind remained unaffected. She had gone down to the borders of the grave without alarm, and had come up without gratitude. At this moment, when all means had failed to impress her heart, when she was no longer under the debilitating influence of extreme disease, nor subject to the consequent vagaries of imagination, it pleased God to display his so-

vereign grace in her. What preaching could not do; what a mother's and a sister's tears could not accomplish; what a sight of the divine wonders wrought in others had no power to effect; what a near prospect of death had failed to perform; *that* was done in a moment by the the Spirit of God. The scales fell from her eyes. She discovered what she had never seen before, the deep depravity of her heart, the sinfulness of her life, the greatness of her guilt in the sight of a holy God, and the utter ruin in which she was involved. She saw herself arraigned before the tribunal of the divine law, and justly condemned. She saw that external morality in which she had trusted, could not cleanse her soul, that her own righteousness was nothing better than "filthy rags;" and perceived for the first time, her extreme need of a Saviour. It was not in pride any longer to stifle conviction, or seal her lips. She disclosed these feelings to her friends, and was constrained to pour forth the impassioned cry, "what shall I do to be saved?" It was proposed to call in her minister. She would have been glad of this, but was "ashamed to see him." After a few days, during which her convictions increased, he was sent for, and came. She took his hand; "Oh!" said she, "I have been very wicked. I have hated you;" adding hesitatingly, "can you ever forgive me?" This was said with an air of sorrow and kindness which cannot be described.

From this time the sweetness and sanctity of her manners delighted all who saw her. She gradually obtained comfortable views of Christ, joyously approved of the way of salvation by him, and was enabled to rest her soul upon him.

In the latter part of May, her health began again to decline. In the hope that a journey might have a salutary effect, she was conveyed to the house of her uncle, the Rev. William Schenck, of Huntington, on Long Island. In the night after her arrival, she apprehended that she was dying, and requested that Mr. Schenck might be called in to pray with her. In the course of his prayer, she repeatedly said, in a whisper, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit!" The next morning, she expressed some fears that she might be deceived, and seemed anxious to obtain a more perfect knowledge of her own heart. These apprehensions soon subsided and left her entirely composed and resigned. In this state she continued uniformly till her death. She often said, "Thy will be done." She expressed great desire that her will might be wholly swallowed up

in the will of God. "If it please God," said she, "to restore me to health, that I may live to his glory, so let it be: but if it be his will to remove me from this state of sin and sorrow, I pray him to take me to himself; and be the time and the manner his own." A few minutes before she expired, she said, "I go where my Saviour is." And again, "I go to meet my dear father, [meaning her deceased parent] in the world above."

The exercises of her mind in the last days of her life, are more fully described in the following interesting letter, addressed to her only surviving sister, by Miss Schenck.

Huntington, July 3d, 1808.

Agreeably to your request, my cousin, I write to you. Though the death of our dear Maria spreads an air of sadness through the house, yet I hope some of us, (and O that it may be blessed to us all!) are striving cheerfully to acquiesce in the divine will. My cousin, let us all endeavour to see in this dispensation a Father's hand, who does not willingly afflict. He has smitten, and he can heal. O! may we ardently pray that this great affliction may be sanctified to us for our spiritual and eternal good. My wounded heart truly sympathizes with you, and with my dear, dear aunt. Judging of your feelings by my own, I know they must be heart rending. I consider it no common sorrow; no common call. Busy memory recals all the pleasant hours we have spent together, while the hand of affection casts a veil over any little unpleasant circumstances which may have occurred. I fear I too often indulge the tear of recollection. Let us not yield to unavailing regret, that she who was so lately lovely and dear to us, is taken from our sight; for have we not reason to believe that she is put in possession of far superior happiness? Yes, I trust she is with her Saviour and her God.

Shortly after she came to Huntington, she took my hand very affectionately, and fixing her eyes on mine, she said, "God has been very merciful to me, my cousin, since I saw you. He has given me to see and hate sin, and to see Jesus as a precious Saviour, an all sufficient Saviour. My conflict with sin and Satan has been great; but, through Christ strengthening me, I hope I have triumphed over all my foes: and I think I can sincerely say, I feel entirely resigned to his divine will." To this effect she would often sweetly express her love to God, her confidence in him, and her desire for his glory.

An hour before her death, she appeared to suffer extremely. A cold sweat bedewed her face, and the rattling phlegm in her throat almost suffocated her. I was sitting on the bed behind her. I said, "You suffer much, my cousin." She replied, "I do; but I hope I do not murmur. Have you ever heard me?" I told her I never had. And in truth she was the most patient sufferer I ever beheld. Mama and cousin Hooper then said something to her, to which she listened attentively, and then said, "I suffer much; but my dear Saviour suffered more for sinners, of whom I am chief. He has passed the gloomy vale, and has gone to prepare a place for those who love him: and I trust I love him." Soon after this she breathed more easily. On being asked whether she felt any relief, she replied, "Yes; through mercy, I am greatly relieved." On being told that an express was gone to Newark, she said, "I hoped before noon to see my dear Jesus; but, if it is God's will, I should be willing to stay till evening, to see Susan: but his blessed will be done." She often asked, what o'clock, and said, "this is a very long day. Lord Jesus, come quickly. My Saviour, take me in thine arms. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." She several times looked earnestly at my mother, and said, "how is mama? O! tell her not to mourn for me. *Do* comfort her." She was asked several times if her mama should be called into the room. "O no; O no;" said she, "blessed God, comfort her!"

Fifteen or twenty minutes before the scene closed, she clasped her hands as if in prayer: after which she looked at us; her lips moved; her voice seemed gone; but making a great effort, she distinctly said, "I rejoice that he who reigns is glorious." She appeared in a pleasant sleep for a few moments; then, with a smile on her countenance, she cast her eyes on each one in the room, and soon closed them on this sublunary scene. A few deep drawn sighs were all that escaped her: then, sweetly as babes sleep, did she resign her life when her Saviour called her. We could not help crying in the midst of our tears, "What a lovely appearance of death!"

Soft was the moment and serene,
That all her sufferings clos'd;
No painful sigh to intervene,
No feature discompos'd.

And shall we mourn for her? O no: she shall have our affectionate remembrance;

But let us shed our tears
For all our errors and approaching years.

Let it be our concern to derive lasting benefit from this affliction.

Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,
To damp our brainless ardour, and abate
The glare of life, which often blinds the eyes.

Smitten friends
Are angels sent on errands full of love;
For us they languish, and for us they die;
And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain?

God grant that this afflictive dispensation may call us all to watchfulness and prayer.

We have had Mr. ——— and his lady with us. They appear to be an amiable and pious couple. They went with us to visit Maria's grave, and shed the tear of sympathy over it. There we viewed the spot lately chosen for our family burying place. It caused solemn, and, I hope, not unprofitable reflections. Adieu. More than ever, dear cousin, may we live to the glory of God. This is the prayer of your cousin, CATHARINE.

The following feeling lines, first inserted in the Suffolk Gazette, were written by a young lady belonging to Huntington.

ELEGY

On the death of Miss Maria Stockton, of Newark, New-Jersey, who departed this life at Huntington, June 28, 1808.

O death! thou tyrant, must thine icy hand
Snatch from our fond embrace the friend we love?
Say, cannot youth resist thy stern command?
Nor virtue bid thy cruel shafts remove?

Ah! no; in vain a widow'd mother's tears,
Vain the affliction of a sister's heart,
And vain, O friendship, all thy anxious fears;
Nor youth nor virtue can elude the dart.

Else, dear Maria, o'er thine early bier
The hearts of those who lov'd thee had not bled;
Could these have sav'd the friend, the kindred dear,
Thou hadst not now been number'd with the dead.

Alas! the form which once had power to please,
The breast which heaven each tender feeling gave,
Wasted away by ling'ring dire disease,
Lies in the silent chambers of the grave.

Yet though thy body joins its parent clay,
And here on earth we ne'er shall see thee more,
Thy soul, we trust, has found the realms of day,
And dwells in glory on the blissful shore.

Thy dying hour, how tranquil and serene!
How sweet the words thy quiv'ring lips express'd!
"My Saviour comes to close the trying scene;
This day I hope in his dear arms to rest.

My mother, come, embrace your child once more;
Submit to heaven, and humbly kiss the rod;
Soon will my pains and sorrows all be o'er;
O! be compos'd, and give me up to God."*

Thus thy blest soul, secure from doubts and fears,
While friends wept round, and watch'd thy panting breath,
With sweet composure dried their falling tears,
Then smiling sunk into the arms of death.

And Oh! that smile still sat upon thy face,
E'en when his hand had clos'd thy weary eyes,
Sweetly expressive of thy finish'd race,
And glorious rest, now enter'd in the skies.

Stay then, blest soul, enjoy thy peaceful home;
Nor sin nor sorrow there can wound the heart;
There, blessed thought, disease and death ne'er come,
And thou from Jesus' smiles no more shalt part.

"Still to my soul thy memory shall be dear,"
While life's warm current flows within my breast;
And when I leave the scene of sorrow here,
There may I meet thee, and be ever blest.

ELLA.

* These were, nearly verbatim, the words which she uttered, just before her dissolution.

POETRY.

Lines composed by a christian lady four days after her husband's death.

Now let my heart no more repine,
My tongue no more complain;
The blessing is no longer mine
And pray'rs and tears are vain.

'Twas sov'reign mercy spar'd so long,
My dearest earthly bliss;
Nor can a Father's hand do wrong,
E'en in a stroke like this.

I bend submissive at his feet,
And dumb before his throne;
All I have known that's kind or sweet,
Has flow'd from him alone.

I dare not call his ways unjust,
I tremble at the thought;
He who began the work at first,
Has full salvation wrought.

The dear immortal liv'd by faith,
On Jesus' faithful word;
And with his faltering dying breath
He magnified the Lord.

He spake of his unchanging love
With tears of joy and praise;
Well did his thankful heart approve
The methods of his grace.

He bid his darling boys adieu,
Embracing with a tear;
Then said, "my Nancy, but for you
"I've done with all things here."

"'Tis you that binds me still to earth,
"'Tis you my bliss delay;
"O could you feel how great His worth,
"You would not urge my stay."

" Freely my dear your gift resign,
" Mercies are only lent;
" Your heart is sensible as mine,
" Of Jesus' kind intent."

" Sure were it best for me to stay,
" My life his love would spare;
" No longer then my flight delay
" Nor pour the impassion'd pray'r."

" Jesus reveals his beauteous face
" And angels call me home;
" Idols, no more retard my pace!
" I come, my Lord, I come."

Thus welcom'd he th' approach of death;
While on my arm reclin'd,
Gently he yielded up his breath;
And I the gift resign'd.

And shall I, O my Lord, repine!
And shall I chide thy ways!
No! let this heart be wholly thine,
And let me live thy praise.

Lead on, ye hours, the joyful day,
When I to heav'n shall rise
And join my husband, in the lay,
Of millions in the skies.